



# HOUSTON ACTION RESEARCH TEAM



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## *Plant It Forward Ecosystem Service Evaluation Project, Fall 2019*

This HART, made up of undergraduate students from Anthropology, Ecology and Evolutionary Biology, Environmental Science, and Chemical Engineering, collaborated with Plant It Forward (PIF), an organization that seeks to empower refugees to develop sustainable urban farming business in Houston, to identify and evaluate the environmental benefits and ecosystem services provided to the Houston area by PIF's operations. The team used a combination of methodological techniques, including building a literature based dataset and evaluation tool, consulting with subject matter experts, and conducting experimental analysis in order to evaluate the ecosystem service benefits provided by PIF farm sites. The focus of the research centered on the ecosystem services that were most relevant to PIF operations including: food production, biodiversity, pollination, biological pest control, carbon regulation, soil formation, nutrient regulation, and aesthetics. The team produced a report that suggested PIF does indeed provide an array of benefits to the local communities the farm are situated in. Additionally, the team provided recommendations that PIF could implement in order to increase the positive environmental impact of their farm sites on the Houston area.

### Report Recommendations and Affected Ecosystem

